

eduGAIN explained (EN)

eduGAIN interconnects federations worldwide. It allows users to gain easy access to content, services and other online resources from the worldwide education and research community. eduGAIN enables secure exchange of data about identities, authentication and authorisation. eduGAIN accomplishes this by coordinating parts of the technical infrastructure from participating federations and by establishing several policy documents to safeguard the exchange of personal data. eduGAIN is developed by the GÉANT project.

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Federated collaboration across national borders?

National federations offer a generic approach to handle authentication and authorisation between institutions and providers of cloud services. Although this is very useful, the focus is often on a national level. This makes it more difficult for organisations from different countries to work together federatively. [This page describes the challenges for federated collaboration across national borders.](#)

eduGAIN offers solution

eduGAIN is a form of *interfederation*. Participating federations share information (metadata) about entities from their own federation with eduGAIN. Next, eduGAIN bundles these metadata and publishes it on a central location. [This page describes how eduGAIN handles the challenges for international federated collaboration.](#)

Different federation architectures: mesh vs. hub-and-spoke

eduGAIN technically operates in a different manner than SURFconext. eduGAIN is based on the mesh principle, whereas SURFconext is based on the hub-and-spoke principle. This difference is important for entities who want to collaborate internationally through eduGAIN. [This page describes the characteristics of the different federation architectures.](#)

Code of Conduct

An essential aspect of federated collaboration through eduGAIN is trust: the idea that federations participating in eduGAIN trust each other as a whole. And eventually, that an entity from the Dutch federation SURFconext can trust an entity from another federation, e.g. the Swiss federation SWITCH-AAI. An important document for establishing this trust is the GÉANT Data Protection Code of Conduct. Service Providers are recommended to sign and support this document to adhere to the strict European laws for security and privacy. [This page describes the GÉANT Data Protection Code of Conduct in more detail.](#)

Can I use OpenID Connect in eduGAIN?

No. eduGAIN uses SAML and does not support OpenID Connect. An eduGAIN Federation PoC for [OpenID Connect is being worked on](#). There is no date set for production yet.

Which federations participate in eduGAIN?

On the eduGAIN-website you can see [which countries and which federations participate in eduGAIN](#).